

that the people of Zimbabwe succeed in their fight for freedom and genuine democracy.

BOY SCOUTS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor an important institution in America that has contributed greatly to the quality of our youth and is very dear to my heart and the hearts of many here—the Boy Scouts of America.

For more than 90 years, the Scouts have supported our youth and helped produce some of the best and brightest leaders in our country—as many of my colleagues can attest—and I believe we must reaffirm our support for the vital work they have done and continue to do. Like many of my friends here, I was a Boy Scout many years ago.

As a result of the great work they do, I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of S. 642, the “Support Our Scouts Act of 2005”, a bill that reinforces our strong commitment to the Boy Scouts.

In fact, I had at one time considered introducing my own bill on this very important matter. However, I was so pleased with the substance of this bill that I was proud to add my name as a cosponsor, and I thank my leader, Senator FRIST, for his efforts on this issue.

This bill addresses efforts by some groups to prevent federal agencies from supporting our Scouts. This bill would remove any doubts that Federal agencies can welcome Scouts and the great work they do from camping on Federal property to hosting the national jamboree every 4 years at Fort A.P. Hill.

As Senator FRIST has said, this legislation will specifically ensure that the Department of Defense can and will continue to provide Scouts the type of support it has provided in the past. Moreover, the Scouts would be permitted equal access to public facilities, forums, and programs that are open to a variety of other youth or community organizations.

Regrettably, as we all know, in recent years, the Boy Scouts have come under attack from aggressive liberal groups blatantly pushing their own social agendas.

In particular, Scouts have been the target of lawsuits by organizations that are more concerned with pushing these liberal agendas than sincerely helping our youth.

For instance, the Federal government is currently defending a lawsuit aimed at severing traditional ties between the Boy Scouts and the Departments of Defense and Housing and Urban Development.

What is more, Scouts have been excluded by certain State and local governments from utilizing public facilities, forums and programs, which are open to other groups.

It is certainly disappointing and, frankly, frustrating that we have

reached a point where groups like the ACLU are far more interested in tearing down great institutions like the Boy Scouts than helping foster character and values in our young men.

I am tired of these tactics. It is very disturbing to me that these groups unabashedly attack organizations, regardless of the good they do or the support they have from the vast majority of Americans, simply to further their own subjective social agendas.

I for one, am saddened that the Boy Scouts of America has been the most recent target of these frivolous lawsuits. I reject any arguments that the Boy Scouts is anything but one of the greatest programs for character development and values-based leadership training in America today.

We must coalesce around those values that are so important to our society. We should seek to aid, not impede, groups that promote values like duty to God and country, faith and family, and public service and sacrifice, which are deeply ingrained in the oath of every scout.

To fail to support such values would allow the very fabric of America, which has brought us to this great place in history, to be destroyed.

Today, with more than 3.2 million youth members, and more than 1.2 million adult volunteers, we can certainly say that the Boy Scouts of America has positively impacted the lives of generations of boys, preparing them to be men of great character and values. Remarkably, Boy Scout membership since 1910 totals more than 110 million.

I am proud to report that in Oklahoma we have a total youth participation of nearly 75,000 boys, and in Oklahoma City alone, we have about 7,000 adult volunteers.

These young men have helped serve communities all over our State with programs like Helping Hands for Heroes, program where Scouts help military families whose loved ones are serving overseas. These young men have cut grass, cleaned homes, taken out the garbage and walked dogs. What a great service for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines and their families. Our Boy Scouts have also to served as ushers and first aid responders at the University of Oklahoma football games for more than 50 years.

Notably, Scouts in my State have also shared a long and proud history of cooperation and partnership with military installations in Oklahoma.

Given all this, I hope my colleagues will join me in defending this organization and others like it. We must not be afraid to support our youth and organizations like the Boy Scouts that support them.

LIVING STRONGER, LONGER

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize National Public

Health Week and its important theme of “Living Stronger, Longer.” Today, seniors are leading active and healthy lifestyles unmatched by previous generations. They are working longer, eating better, and utilizing medical advances that detect and treat illnesses before it is too late. But as our aging population doubles within the next decade, new challenges await us in ensuring that supply can meet an increasing demand.

This week marks the 10th Annual National Public Health Week, focusing on Living Stronger, Longer. I am proud to join the organizations involved that advocate for seniors every day and bring vital issues to the forefront during this week-long public information campaign promoting long and healthy lives for all Americans.

Public health advancements and new treatment options are enabling Americans to live longer and longer, but many older Americans still continue to suffer from preventable and treatable health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Americans can prevent and treat many of the common health problems that hinder the enjoyment of later years if they have access to affordable health care.

I know that as I travel throughout Wisconsin, speaking to seniors' groups and individuals, I often hear their concerns about the rising costs of health care and prescription drugs. As the lead Democrat on the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I am committed to protecting seniors' access to quality health care and I am committed to making sure that Medicare is preserved as a vital health program for seniors.

One of the key components to living longer, healthier lives is access to life-saving prescription drugs. I have long been concerned about the high cost of prescription drugs, which can make it hard for Wisconsinites to afford the medicines they need to stay healthy. Today, Americans pay substantially higher prices for the same medicines that are far less expensive in many other countries. It is not fair to ask Americans to pay higher prices for the same medicines that cost a fraction of the price in other countries. That is why I support legislation to allow Americans to take advantage of lower drug prices found in other countries by legalizing the importation of FDA-approved drugs from other countries. I also support legislation to change a troublesome feature of the new Medicare prescription drug law that prohibits the Government from utilizing the tremendous purchasing power of the Medicare Program to reduce prices.

I am also concerned about the rising premiums seniors are facing in the Medicare Program. In addition to lowering the cost of prescription drugs, I will also continue to fight inefficiencies in Medicare and work to make